



Jesus Proves He's God

John 5:19-47

Notes: The primary reference used in developing this Bible Study was the *Life Application Commentary*. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New International Version unless otherwise indicated.

5:19-20 – Is there anything that Jesus can not do?

He can do nothing independent of the Father. This is possible because the son and Father of are one spirit. Also, the Father loves the Son and shows him all He does.

How can we apply the pattern Jesus demonstrated for what He did to our own lives?

When we need guidance, we can ask ourselves:

- What would Jesus do?
- What would Jesus have me do?

5:20 – What greater works was Jesus referring to here?

Jesus was referring to God The Son's ability to give life to the dead and to execute judgment.

5:21 – How do you think Jesus' audience reacted to what he said in this verse?

They were shocked because Jesus was claiming to be God by saying he could reverse the power of death by resurrection.

5:22 – Who is our judge?

Jesus is our judge. The Father has delegated this authority to Him.

5:23 – Why did the Father entrust all judgment to the Son?

The Father entrusted all judgment to the Son so that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father.

Is it possible to honor God the Father and not God the Son?

No, because anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. A time is coming when everyone will honor Jesus...

Philippians 2:9-11 - Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This occasion will happen at the great white throne judgment when all the unsaved are judged, Revelation 20:11-15.

What is tragic about those who say we worship the same God, that He just has different names?

Those unwilling to honor Christ will discover that they have not been honoring the Father either.

5:24 – What does hearing God's word result in?

True hearing results in believing for as Paul says, "*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17, NKJV).

John 3:16 says you must believe in Jesus yet this verse says you must believe in God the Father; which is it?

Both... This statement affirms the unity of the Father and the Son. To believe in the Father is to believe in the Son he sent to earth.

What does it mean that the believer does not come under judgment?

The issue of our salvation was settled at the cross. The instant we begin believing in Jesus we pass from death into life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. (NKJV)

5:25 – What does it mean that the time is coming and now is when the dead hear the Son's voice?

The now part of this addresses spiritual salvation when non-believers begin believing in Jesus. This beginning of belief is a sign that they are saved at this point. The future aspect of this pertains to the physically dead who died trusting in Christ. There will come a time when their bodies will be resurrected from the grave. God has two kinds of life-giving power... the power to give life as we know it and the power to give life as He knows it.

5:26 – What does it mean that the Father has life in Himself?

Human beings do not have the power to create life in themselves. They certainly are a party to babies coming into the world but even this is still a work of God. God does not need any other source to bring about life; He is the source and Creator of all life.

What is the significance of Jesus' claim the also have life in Himself?

Jesus wasn't any ordinary man, He is claiming the have the same nature as God the Father. This helps us to have a better understanding of the Triune Godhead. While the Son is clearly a separate person from the Father, they share the same power.

5:27 – Does this verse contradict John 3:17 where Jesus denied coming into the world to judge it?

Jesus came to make the way for our sins to be forgiven and to establish His spiritual kingdom. The Messiah judging the earth is associated with His return in glory which would be at a later time. John 5:27 says that Jesus has the authority to judge but John 3:17 says that He is not exercising that authority during His initial advent. This judgment is reserved for His return.

Why did the Father give Jesus authority to judge?

Jesus was given authority to judge because He is the Son of Man... Note that this is one of Jesus' favorite titles for Himself because it is a reference to the Messiah:

Daniel 7:13 - I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. (NKJV)

Thus God gave Jesus authority to judge because He was the Messiah. The authority of the Messiah to execute judgment on the earth is made clear in Scripture.

Besides being the Messiah, who was Jesus saying He was by having the authority to judge?

Only God has the authority to judge people. God uses government authorities to as for Him in judgment but this authority comes from God Himself and final authority rests with God.

Psalm 9:7-8 - The LORD reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment. He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.

Why is it comforting to know that our judge is not only God but also a man?

This demonstrated that Jesus knows us intimately as our Creator because He has also "walked in our shoes."

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

5:28-29 – Who will be resurrected and who will not?

All people will be resurrected, both those who will be spending eternity with the Lord and those who will be eternally separated from Him.

When will these resurrections occur?

Those who will be spending eternity with the Lord will be resurrected just prior to Jesus returning to rule the earth.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 - For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Those who died not trusting in Jesus for their salvation will be resurrected at the end of the Lord's 1,000-year reign on earth.

Revelation 6, - Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

5:30 – What does this passage tell us about the Trinity?

It is clear from this passage that God the Son is a separate person from God the Father and that He acts under the authority of the Father. This also speaks to the divine unity in the Triune Godhead... Jesus only does what pleases the Father. So the only differences between the persons of the Godhead are the roles that they have.

5:31-32 – Why doesn't Jesus ask us to take His testimony about Himself as is without the testimony of others?

According to the Jewish law, truth could only be established by two or three collaborating witnesses:

Deuteronomy 19:15 - One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

5:33-34 – Who else testified about Jesus?

John the Baptist was one of the witnesses that testified about Him. It has been said that John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. Certainly people recognized that his call for repentance in preparation of the Messiah coming was from God. So when John identified Jesus as the "one who takes away the sin if the world," his testimony was credible.

Why was the testimony of John necessary?

The testimony of John was necessary so that people would believe that Jesus was the Messiah and thus be saved. Jesus didn't need this human testimony Himself but the Jewish people did need such independent corroboration.

5:35 – How was John the Baptist like a lamp?

According to John 1:8, John the Baptist was a reflector of the light but not the light itself. As a lamp illuminates so that we can see what is there, John the Baptist helped people see that Jesus was the Messiah. As a lamp only provides

light for a time then burns out, so too was John's testimony eventually extinguished.

Who "chose for a time to enjoy" the light of John the Baptist?

Some of the Jews accepted the message of John the Baptist and were content for a while to bask in the light he brought to them. But they didn't really understand the personal implications of his message which pointed them to Jesus as the Messiah. Thus they missed the whole point of John's ministry. Recall that there were followers of John who were jealous of Jesus having more followers.

John 3:26-30 - they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified-- behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!" ... He must increase, but I must decrease. (NKJV)

How is the illustration of John being like a lamp an example for us?

We too have the privilege and the command to make sure those who are regularly part of our lives know of our relationship with Jesus Christ...

Matthew 5:16 - let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

5:36 – What testifies that Jesus was sent by God the Father?

The work that Jesus was doing showed that He was fulfilling prophecy about the Messiah. The word "finish" is key here to seeing that the specific work that Jesus referred to was His work on the cross where Jesus said, "*it is finished*" (John 19:30).

5:37 – On what occasions did the Father testify on behalf of Jesus?

The Father gave direct witness to Jesus as His Son at His baptism (Matthew 3:16-17, on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5), before His crucifixion (John 12:28, and in His resurrection (Romans 1:3-4). Indirect witness from the Father came through Jesus fulfilling prophecy and the miracles that He performed... Indeed Nicodemus said:

John 3:2 – "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Why did Jesus tell His audience that they had never heard God's voice or seen His form?

Certainly it was Jesus who addressed them and He was God Himself in the flesh. However, since they did not recognize Him as God, they really had not seen God.

5:38 – What did the unbelief of the Jews result in?

The Jewish religious leaders really did not have the Word of God abiding in them. If the Word of God really was abiding in them, they would have recognized the one to whom the Scriptures give testimony.

5:39 – What is wrong with studying the Scriptures? Doesn't eternal life come from the Scriptures?

It is not the process of studying the Scriptures that saves, it is the object of who the Scriptures testify about that saves. Certainly studying the Scriptures can lead us to Jesus but there is nothing we can do to earn favor with God to merit salvation. If we fail to see the object of biblical testimony, we miss the very purpose of the Scriptures.

How do people miss the point of the Bible today?

As the Pharisees did during Jesus' day, people can think they may earn salvation by devoting themselves to studying the Bible. Some people elevate the Bible to the point where they think that salvation can only come from using the King James version of the Bible. Such a view of the Bible borders on worship which would make it idolatry. People who have the wrong attitude about why they should be studying the Bible forget that we can not really understand the Bible apart from the Holy Spirit...

John 14:26 – the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

5:40 – What are people who refuse to Jesus rejecting?

To reject Jesus is to reject eternal life because Christ is the source of eternal life. People reject Jesus because they do not value eternal life enough to consider the truth about how one may have eternal life. The amazing thing is that they will receive the desire of their hearts, to not have eternal life.

5:41 – Does God need honor from men?

God does not need honor from men. Honor from men certainly pleases God but this is not why He saved us. Ephesians 2:4 teaches us that God chose to save us because "of his great love for us" and his rich mercy. It also brings God praise and glory (Ephesians 1:6).

5:42 – What did the Jewish religious leaders love?

The Jewish religious leaders loved their religion more than God. If they had truly loved God, they'd have recognized the one God had sent to them. These religious leaders were actually idolaters because they worshiped their religion instead of God.

5:43 – What didn't the religious leaders accept?

The Jewish religious leaders did not accept Jesus' claims of being the one sent by the Father.

Who will the religious leaders accept?

The religious leaders were quick to embrace other religious leaders who came in their own name. There had been many who had claimed to be the Messiah and had been embraced as such. All of these false Messiahs foreshadow the ultimate false Messiah that the Bible calls the Antichrist.

5:44 – Why couldn't the religious leaders believe in Jesus?

The religious leaders were so dependant on being accepted by the group that an individual could hardly take a stand that differed from the rest. They didn't really seek to honor and glorify God. Instead of glorifying God by coming to believe in the Son, they continued to seek acceptance from their unbelieving peers.

Why did the great prestige that the religious leaders enjoyed in Israel mean nothing to Jesus?

Jesus was completely focused on God's approval. Human accolades were insignificant in comparison to praise from God.

What is the principle here that we should apply to our own lives?

We should seek to please God even if this conflicts with the highest worldly authorities. If God approves of what we do we should be content.

5:45 – Who accused the religious leaders of error?

Jesus was not accusing the Jewish religious leaders of error, He was merely pointing out that the Law delivered through Moses is what accused them. The Pharisees prided themselves in being true followers of the Law of Moses but they were missing the whole point of the Law. They missed the conclusion that they must trust in God for salvation rather than their own righteousness.

5:46-46 – Why didn't the religious leaders believe Jesus?

The Jewish religious leaders didn't believe Jesus because they really didn't believe Moses. If they had believed Moses, they'd have recognized Jesus as the one Moses had prophesied about. For example:

Genesis 3:15 - And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."